

Message Text

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ACTION AF-04

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 EUR-08 MCT-01 EB-04 INR-05

CIAE-00 NSAE-00 DODE-00 INRE-00 SSO-00 /037 W

-----039781 181759Z /43

O 181700Z NOV 77

FM AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6830

INFO AMEMBASSY LISBON

C O N F I D E N T I A L KINSHASA 11018

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, PINT, AO, CG, ASEC

SUBJECT: KIDNAPPING OF GULF-CABINDA EMPLOYEES

REF: KINSHASA 10878

1. SUMMARY: PORTUGUESE AMBASSADOR HAS RECEIVED LETTERS FROM THREE PORTUGUESE EMPLOYEES OF GULF-CABINDA CONFIRMING THEIR DETENTION BY CMLC IN CABINDA AND ASKING FOR HIS HELP. HE HAS ALSO RECEIVED CMLC PROPOSAL FOR MEETING "IN NEUTRAL TERRITORY" OF REPS OF CMLC, PORTUGUESE GOVERNMENT AND GULF-CABINDA. CMLC HAS INDICATED IT MAY TRY TO BRING USG INTO MATTER VIA THIS EMBASSY. GUIDANCE REQUESTED. END SUMMARY.

2. PORTUGUESE AMBASSADOR MARTIN WAS CONTACTED LAST NIGHT, NOVEMBER 17, BY PORTUGUESE RESIDENT KINSHASA WHO IS IN TOUCH WITH CMLC REPRESENTATIVES HERE. ON THEIR BEHALF PORTUGUESE RESIDENT DELIVERED TO MARTIN: (A) LETTERS DATED NOVEMBER 10 TO MARTIN ALLEGEDLY HANDWRITTEN BY THREE CAPTIVE PORTUGUESE GULF EMPLOYEES, CONFIRMING THEIR DETENTION IN CABINDA AND ASKING FOR ASSISTANCE IN FORM OF CLOTHING, SOAP, ETC.; (B) PHOTOCOPIES OF SIMILAR LETTERS ADDRESSED FROM CAPTIVE PORTUGUESE EMPLOYEES ADDRESSED TO CABINDA-GULF; (C) PHOTOCOPIES OF SIMILAR LETTERS ADDRESSED TO CAPE VERDE AUTHORITY. CONFIDENTIAL

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TIES FROM THREE CAPE VERDEAN GULF EMPLOYEES WHO REPORTEDLY WERE CAPTURED AT THE SAME TIME; (D) PHOTOCOPIES OF CABINDA-GULF IDENTITY CARDS OF THE THREE CAPTURED PORTUGUESE; (E) TYPED STATEMENT DATED NOVEMBER 8 AND SIGNED BY CMLC CHIEF TUBI CONFIRMING "ACCIDENTAL CAPTURE" OF GULF EMPLOYEES DURING MILITARY OPERATION AND PROPOSING MEETING "WITHIN SEVEN DAYS OF RECEIPT OF THIS COMMUNICATION" AND IN "NEUTRAL TERRITORY" BETWEEN REPRESENTATIVES

OF CMLC, PORTUGUESE GOVERNMENT AND GULF-CABINDA. STATEMENT DOES NOT STIPULATE PURPOSE OF MEETING NOR IS THERE ANY MENTION OF RANSOM.

3. AMBASSADOR MARTIN HAS SENT DETAILED REPORT TO LISBON WITH REQUEST FOR INSTRUCTIONS. HE SAID THAT PORTUGUESE INTERMEDIARY WHO DELIVERED DOCUMENTS HAD THE IMPRESSION FROM HIS CMLC CONTACTS THAT THEY WERE CONTEMPLATING CONTACTING THIS EMBASSY, POSSIBLY WITH VIEW TO HAVING US DELIVER LETTERS TO GULF-CABINDA OR OTHERWISE BRINGING PRESSURE ON GULF TO RESPOND TO TUBI'S APPEAL. INTERMEDIARY CLAIMED HE FORMERLY LIVED IN CABINDA AND NOW WORKS IN UNSPECIFIED CAPACITY FOR GOZ DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE (THUS LEADING MARTIN TO SURMISE THAT GOZ MAY AT LEAST BE AWARE OF CMLC'S ACTIVITIES).

4. GULF-ZAIRE REP KING TOLD US THAT CMLC REPS TRIED TO CALL ON HIM NOVEMBER 18, TELLING RECEPTIONIST IT CONCERNED WELFARE OF DETAINED GULF-CABINDA EMPLOYEES. KING DECLINED TO RECEIVE THEM, CONVEYING WORD TO THEM THAT ANY SUCH MATTERS SHOULD BE ADDRESSED TO GULF REPS EITHER IN CABINDA, LONDON OR HOUSTON.

5. COMMENT AND ACTION REQUESTED: I CONTINUE TO BELIEVE THAT, UNLESS AND UNTIL GULF ASKS FOR OUR ASSISTANCE, WE SHOULD CONTINUE TO TRY TO KEEP BALL IN PORTUGUESE/GULF-CABINDA COURT AND AVOID HAVING USG DRAWN INTO CMLC'S MACHINATIONS. I AM THEREFORE INSTRUCTING MISSION PERSONNEL TO DECLINE TO RECEIVE CMLC REPS IF THEY SHOULD APPROACH US. WOULD APPRECIATE DEPARTMENT'S CONFIRMATION
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OF THIS POSTURE AND ANY FURTHER GUIDANCE TO COVER CONTINGENCIES.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: KIDNAPPING
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 18-Nov-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 22 May 2009
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977KINSHA11018
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770428-0470
Format: TEL
From: KINSHASA
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19771143/aaaabkfi.tel
Line Count: 96
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 90fec216-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Reference: 77 KINSHASA 10878
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 11-Feb-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 535591
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: KIDNAPPING OF GULF-CABINDA EMPLOYEES
TAGS: PINS, PINT, ASEC, AO, CG
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/90fec216-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009